FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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Since 1949 the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer is to promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice, and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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Words of Wisdom

Start where you are with what you have.

George Washington Carver

Why are we melancholy? Sometimes it is because we are selfish.

Author Unknown

With mercy and forbearance shalt thou disarm every foe; for want of fuel the fire expires; mercy and forbearance bring violence to naught.

Buddha

Death is not extinguishing the light.
It is putting out the lamp
Because the dawn has come.

Rabindranath Tagore

God is above all the god of the normal. In the common facts and circumstances of life He draws near to us, quietly He teaches us through the channels of reason, judgement and determining circumstance. We never felt God, we were never conscious of His control, nevertheless the fact remains that we have a store of experience which can only have come from Him; we have been taught by him when we least suspected it; we have been guided — we know it — though the guiding hand rested upon us so lightly that we were unaware of its touch.

William Littleboy

I believe the doctrine of Fox and Barclay, (briefly, that the "Word of God" is Christ, not the Bible, and that the scriptures are profitable in proportion as they are read in the same spirit which gave them forth) to have been a most valuable equipoise to the tendency of other Protestant sects to transfer the idea of infallibility from the Church to the Bible. Nothing, I believe, can really teach us the nature and meaning of inspiration but personal experience of it.

Caroline Stephen

Editorial

We have all seen crystals: flashes of bright color in jewelry, glinting on the surface of new snow, grains of salt, bright conglomerate growths of green pillars displayed in museums. When a crystal hangs in a window, it refracts clear light through itself to make spectrums, rainbows of color on the walls. Sometimes when you look at a crystal, each facet shines back a different color.

When we see our truth as a color shining from a facet of crystal, it becomes easier to accept and learn from people who differ in their perception and experience of the truth. From where I stand, the facet shines yellow. Unless I listen to you, or move about, I will think all reflections of the light are yellow. It is a very short jump from not-listening to the assertion, "All light is yellow!" When we start to insist that our perception is the only 'true' one, we say something equivalent to "All light is mauve. Or chartreuse. But *only* mauve or chartreuse."

But you stand next to me, and from where you stand the light shining through the facet you see looks purple. If we share and listen to our different experiences of God, the different colors of light, perhaps I will learn to see more.

Because you see purple does not mean that I don't see yellow from where I stand. But if I learn to listen, then a spectrum of colors, a number of different practices of the presence of God, become available to me. If I am a Christian and the person standing next to me is a Buddhist, I may not want to change religions, but she has much to teach me about meditation and awareness.

We need each other's differences. We need all colors for light.

And I should not expect you to describe your purple so that it sounds exactly like my yellow. Words rarely can contain the true nature of a color (a visionary experience), so our language may describe but not contain God. It is my job to listen openly, prayerfully to you share your experience of purple. Perhaps someday I will stand where you are standing and then I will see purple for myself.

Perhaps someday I will allow myself to see all the differences in other people as extensions of all the differences and contradictions in myself. Then I will see the crystal hanging in the window of my heart, and seek clearness.

K.L.H.

One From The Heart

Lord, Thou knowest better that I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old.

Keep me from getting talkative, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from the craving to try and straighten out everybody's affairs.

Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful but not to use it all—but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends in the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details—give me wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips to my many aches and pains—they are increasing, and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of other's pains. Help me to endure them with patience.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a saint—some of them are so hard to live with, but a sour old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Help me to extract all possible fun out of life. There are so many funny things around us, and I don't want to miss any of them. Amen.

Written by a Mother Superior
who prefers to remain
anonymous

On Changing The Divine Mind

Most of our trouble lies in praying in such a manner as to attempt to effect a change in the unchangeable God. We ought to pray to such purpose as to effect changes in ourselves. Instead of attempting to put through long-distance calls to the remotest heavens, we ought to do more intra-communicating with the God who is "nigh unto us, in our mouth, in our heart, that we may be aware of him."

Rabbi Nathan A. Perilman
December 4, 1955

When we face an action that demands something of us, we reach a level of energy and joy. If we dance with it, accept its challenge, we will grow.

Reb Dovid Din

Joy is the ability to act simply directly, clearly, accepting each situation and passing through . . . . . In the revelation of God to us there is a communication of joy; every moment is mitzva, every act a composite continual present and thereby a reflection of Divine Nature.

Reb Dovid Din

Life is a narrow bridge. The pain of walking this narrow bridge is that when we are walking in the middle, we are overcome by the fear of falling. Nothing is more gripping than fear. The greatest pain is not that we fall, but that we fear falling.

Reb Dovid Din

Practical Applications

In the political sphere, it is easy to feel that our individual contributions do not make a difference. During the recent upheaval in the Philippines, one reporter noted the political effects of individuals who sought to live in their faith, in prayer, for peace. We thank God for their lives and example.

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As events in the Philippines galloped toward their conclusion, amazing scenes of successful peaceful, democratic mass action—scenes that could be believed only because one knew that they were actually happening—appeared on American television screens or were described in the press. Whatever may occur next in the Philippines, it seems important to save, and savor, some of these scenes in memory:

A woman is standing in front of a tank, praying fervently. It seems that she has prayed the tank to a stop, for it is going nowhere. She is a member of an unarmed crowd that has gone out to confront an armored column of Marines which appears to be heading toward opposition forces now installed in Defense Ministry headquarters, on the outskirts of Manila. The crowd sits in front of the armored column. As night falls, the column retreats. A young woman in the crowd says, "We won. They went back where they came from." But her remark seems to fall short of the full truth of what has happened. To say that "we" have won seems to imply that there might be a "they" that have lost. But the soldiers, in deciding not to attack, "won," too. The front line of the battle that they won was in their minds, where common sense or humanity, or both, prevailed over their opposites. In that battle, no bullet fired from the crowd would have had any effect. But prayer may well have been the ultimate weapon. Having won their interior battle, the soldiers retreated to victory. One reporter suggested that this confrontation might prove to be the most important one in the entire struggle. If so, it was a "battle" that was "won" by the whole Philippine people, because there wasn't a battle. One man in the crowd may have expressed the deepest truth when he said, "We are all Filippinos—there is no fight here."

Around the positions that have been taken over are more people,

also unarmed and peaceful. The newscasters are calmly telling us that the crowd has assembled to "protect" the soldiers, as if this were the most natural thing in the world. But, as one colonel remarks, "this is something new," adding, "Soldiers are supposed to protect the civilians. In this particular case, you have civilians protecting the soldiers." Inside, some light is shed on this surprising inversion of the usual order of things in an interview that Lieutenant General Fidel V. Ramos, a leader of the opposition forces, is giving to the NBC correspondent Marvin Kalb. Part of the interview goes as follows:

KALB: Do you believe, General, that you have the tanks, the planes, to repel any kind of attack that President Marcos may feel is necessary to launch?

RAMOS: We do not have the military hardware to resist the attacks that we feel are forthcoming, or are being contemplated, by Mr. Marcos. However, we are utilizing people's power—

KALB: *(interrupting):* What do you mean by people?

RAMOS *(continuing):*—that prevails over the military formations of Mr. Marcos, and so far the use of the people confronting tanks and armored columns has proved to be very successful out here.

KALB *(in a "come-off-it" tone):* But then if the President chooses to use military force, you're a general, you know that you will have to have military force to fight back, and you're really saying you don't have it. Is that right?

RAMOS: We do not have as much as he has, of course. But I think that the power which is in the hands of the people to compel a decision favorable to us from Mr. Marcos is there.

Thus, at a key moment in the Philippine revolution, went an exchange between a reporter, who was astonished to consider the possibility that superior force might not be decisive, and a general who, after a lifetime of military service, had discovered a power greater than military force.

The crowd has encircled an armed military unit, which sits on the grass. The scene nicely symbolizes the apparent state of the Philippine nation at that moment. An island of military force is surrounded, and, for the time being, paralyzed, by an ocean of popular resistance. Two kinds of strength confront one another: the strength of guns and the strength of the people's will—the strength of violence and the strength of peaceful action. Clearly, the guns, if they are used, can kill hundreds of the encircling civilians at any moment. And no prayers can stop the bullets once they are fired. But the bullets are not fired. Some sentiment or calculation or scruple stays the soldiers' hands, and they sit peacefully on the grass.

Attain utmost emptiness
Hold firm to stillness.
The ten thousand things stir about:
I only watch for their going back.
Things flourish,
But each returns to its root.
Returning to the root is peace
and peace is a going back to reality.

To go back to reality is to be constant.
To know the constant is to find insight;
Not to know the constant is to court calamity.

To know the constant is to be broad.
To be broad is to be just.
To be just is to be Manly.
To be Manly is to be heavenly.
To be heavenly is to find Tao.
To find Tao is to live forever
And to rob danger from death.

From the Tao Teh Ching - Lao Tzu
Translated by Herrymon Maurer

On The Achievement Of A Valuable Life

What a precious gift we have in each day of our lives. A day in which we truly can accomplish many things. A lifetime could be lived in one day if it would be totally dedicated to doing things which would be unselfish and helpful to others. There is so much that can be done for one another in a joyful way. So many simple things, the gift of a smile or kind words or a few moments of time to listen to someone else. Or even just sitting for awhile in the silence listening for words of love from the spirit within.

This is your day Divine Presence. There are people and plans which will come together in Thy perfect harmony. We do not know why we plan certain events but we can always be sure that if love is the guiding intent, then all will be well. We do not always have to understand someone to love them. To love is to accept them wholeheartedly as a child of God, and to see the Christ principle in them shining forth. We are here to help one another and to extend love to each one. This is one of our prime reasons for being here. Love undergirds all undertakings and makes them a blessing.

To seek only the spiritual reality is the ultimate goal in life. We are however here also to help one another in this particular phase of existence. If we would reap the knowledge from this stage of life we must turn our thoughts to the highest source. We are making progress only as we acknowledge that whatever steps we are taking and whatever thoughts we think will be God-centered and God directed. We are living totally by Grace and will then be moving freely and with compassion and understanding for others.

The ultimate reality is to find the true meaning of the soul on its spiritual journey. As we encounter each day the material world we become increasingly aware that this is not the perfect fulfillment of that for which we were designed. Centering down daily with God reveals our overall destiny as blueprinted in the Divine mind. I see each day that the wisdom of the Divine intelligence has already formulated our course and as we turn over our life to Him we no longer have to fear for the perfect solution.

Zelma Dennis

Living is difficult business. And sometimes there is a strong temptation to take each moment of discomfort as an indication of eternity to be contemplated, cherished and passed between friends. Sometimes it is good and necessary to be reminded of the alternatives which accompany every pain we experience.

We Are Almost Tempted To Thank Thee...

Months and months of illness-exhausted by medication, tests and the long fights to regain mental, physical and spiritual health — Too weak to continue, alone, one morning, I phone my friend and repeat my condition, my feelings. She listens. (O what we all crave is a Listener!).

After my sad recital she waits in silence and then almost shouts at me:

HOW THANKFUL ARE YOU?

which really rocks me off my self-pity pedestal. Would you believe I began to count my blessings?

I can see, I can hear, taste, smell —
I can walk (with a strong arm holding me)
I own no unbearable pain, O Gloria!
I have a warm bed, and a room with wide window-view into northwest skies, into tall evergreen where I see again, the Christ.

I can eat, swallow. I have a wonderful family. I list each, enjoy them — husband, children, their wives, husbands, children. I relish their kindnesses, appreciations, gifts. I am wallowing in love! By the time my husband returns, I am so filled with thankfulness still counting blessings, that I can find no complaint when he cheerfully inquires, and "how are you feeling?"

...Five Fingers, Five toes, etc.

After long months of suffering this curious illness no doctor could name, I slipped on a phone cord and broke my hip. When I returned home after successful surgery, I found myself wondrously healed of the old malaise.

How thankful am I? Walking on a sea of blessings!

Nixeon Civille Handy

I Heard A Saying

I heard a saying that day utters into day;
they say that within hell are flames of fire
that devour sin and backsliding souls.
There is no angel nor defender that can intercede
for them.

What have you against me, my passion, that with
the sweet vanities of the world you make me
break loose from my work!

I will take reverence as provision for the way
and will ride the heavenly chariots of good deeds,
and then I will find rest.

Who in time is there to assure me that I can
escape the unlucky blows of fate?

The small and the great with the fool and the
brutish perish—

Comes the day of their change and they are wholly
consumed.

How can this be that I drink from
the deep waters of time and enjoy their delights
and like the beasts of the forest, not understand
the meadows of intellect that they have laid waste!

From the Forth Canto
of Immanuel of Rome's Mahberot
(1261-1328?)
Translated by Victor E. Reichert

Spirituality and Everyday Life

If you would like to share your meditations with other members of the Fellowship, do not hesitate to write. But be sure to keep your writing straightforward and brief (no more than four typewritten pages, or about 1,000 words). We have found that simply sharing the experience of God's love and reality can begin a process of transformation in our own lives and the lives of others. The same may be true for you.

Grace

As I began to ponder the meaning of "grace," the word "receive" came to me over and over.

I began to realize that grace is God-given, freely and undeservedly. We may never know it or experience it unless we receive it.

We can miss it as easily as never receiving a package that we know was mailed to us; we know its contents and yet it never reaches us. Years later we find the package on the back porch under some boxes. It was there all the time.

Some of us learn to receive from God before we can receive from our friends, our family or others. Some, quite the opposite, find it easier to receive from someone they can see and touch.

I was one who was willing to receive from God. My insecurities were so many and my desire to know him was so great; I wanted to hear His Voice and to obey His Word.

As I look back I am overwhelmed with a sense of His grace. (I did not know it was grace at the time.) God let me feel secure in Him as I fumbled my way in living out what He was leading me to do. He let me do many "good things" in order that I might build a basic trust in myself and, in turn, in others. He let me let many people look to me and love me. He let me lead myself into leadership roles, where in some instances I'd be deeply hurt. He let me make friendships that would be fractured. He let my heart be opened through a physically unkempt person. He let me suffer again and again. He let my ego grow strong until I could transfer my dependence on myself to Him.

There are many memories of my inability to receive from anyone. For example, when my husband, Bob, and I had two babies, Bob surprised me with our first washing machine. I exclaimed, "You shouldn't have bought it!" I saw his excitement fade quickly into hurt. There was nothing I could say — or unsay.

In order to be sure I would not have to receive from anyone except God I unconsciously learned to control every situation. I did it in "Christian manipulation." I got the right people together at the right time. I led in a way that gave people a good feeling about themselves, but little choice in anything because I had the answers from God.

Of course I did not pronounce all this in words, nor was I aware of the wall I was putting around me. However, this was the energy with which I did many "good works."

Today I do not condemn myself for what I did in the past. I never consciously hurt anyone. The things I did were helpful to many people. I pray that I be forgiven for hurts others may have felt unknown to me. I thank God for letting me experience His grace through discovering how I had shielded myself from the Light of Christ because I was afraid to see clearly. Later I let the Light filter through as I felt His acceptance and as I practiced prayer and listening to Him, and most especially following His guidance.

Another aspect of not being able to receive is that we give and give and give. As long as we stay in control, it is hard to receive. The giving protects us from receiving. We don't even know that we are not receiving.

I can remember the first time I received fully from another per-

son. It began through my friendship with Howard Thurman.

In him I saw a person filled with the love of God and a person who showed that love to people. I saw a man of God honor his creatureliness, as he called it. I never before thought of such a thing. I was ashamed of my creatureliness. I only honored God and that of God in me and in others. I began to see Howard's life as one of ebbing and flowing, giving and receiving on all levels. Through him I learned that it was all right to make mistakes, all right to get sick, natural to get tired at times, and normal to not know all the answers. I saw that with humility came a deep trust in God and a deep love for others. Howard would look at me, nod his head and say, "You're O.K., girl." It was through his acceptance of me that I began to accept myself and others on a new threshold. Slowly I began to receive from others.

Howard loved my husband, Bob, very much. He knew that I had never received what Bob was or what he had to give, even though Howard and I never discussed it. Often he would say about a situation, "Accept your grain of wood or get out." I began to see that I had laid my expectations on Bob and that I had never seen him as he was.

Through a long and painful inner process my eyes were opened and I began to see Bob. He was a man of God who honored his creatureliness in himself and in others! Only God's grace could have given me my husband in the beginning and it was His grace that held him for me until I could receive him.

During the past 11 years I've received Bob; more fully each year. I've given up my need to control him (or anyone else). God has poured down His grace and washed Bob and me in His lovingness.

Also during these more recent years I have seen His grace expressed in such simple, yet profound happenings.

Only this summer when I was extremely tired and had gone to the beach alone to be still and to listen to God, did I look up and see across the sky a small plane pulling a banner which read: IN JESUS CHRIST YOU WILL FIND REST. I've never in 33 years at Virginia Beach seen any banner other than ones advertising places to eat!

I took those words seriously. I stood on them as God's message to me. I held them as Truth revealed to me. I rested in Jesus Christ.

by Louise Wilson

Tibetan Tantric Ritual And Music

On Monday January 13, Fellowship in Prayer and the Holistic Health Association of the Princeton Area presented an evening of Tibetan tantric ritual and music performed by the Gyume Tantric Monks of Tibet.

The Gyume Tantric Monks are considered among the most exalted and esoteric of Tibetan Buddhist orders. Their rituals aim at assisting the process of Enlightment, which the monks believe can be attained during the course of one lifetime.

The Gyume Tantric College and its ritual music tradition were founded in the 15th century. By a special technique which requires years of vocal training and deep concentration, these monks are capable of "one voice chording"—the ability to chant three notes of a chord at once—a feat thought physically impossible until verified by research conducted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The monks are touring the United States under the patronage of the Dalai Lama. They reside in India and this tour is being conducted to raise funds for the rebuilding of their monastery, destroyed during the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

We met the monks not only as members of an esoteric order of Buddhists, but also as people. The monks' warm smiles and open bearing communicated a welcome which reached further than words. They demonstrated that good will pays no heed to the boundaries of language.

In the ecumenical enterprise, worship unites discussion divides. This is especially the case when the worship focuses on shared prayer and Eucharist, since both can validly carry a diversity of people, while at the same time affirming our shared unity. (Sermons, unless insufferably vague, tend to work the other way; one is implicitly asked to agree or disagree with the opinions advanced, thus focussing on the differences.) Of course there is an important place for reasoned dialogue among Christians of different persuasions, but such discussions as presently conceived, it seems to me, presuppose the unity and mutual acceptance which they are trying to create. The growing impatience among Protestant and Catholic laity at the increasingly artificial restrictions on full intercommunication at the parish level is a prophetic sign which our various hierarchies should take more seriously than they do.

John E. Lawyer
exerpt from a letter to
the editors of
Commonweal Magazine
October 4th, 1985

Eversomuchmoreso!!

The most important questions only lead to more meaningful questions in which terms like yes, no, true, false, real or unreal finally vanish in a context large enough to contain all the incongruities, eccentricities, and seeming contradictions in which our greater (larger) realities happen.

We are all ONE infinite everchanging organism....
....Each of us an eternal facet of the Divine jewel.

Unity WITHOUT uniformity is the highest option.

Let us all live a kaleidoscopic rainbow —

TOGETHER!!

Gurudas Rama Bhagwan

Meditation On One Sort Of Love

. . . Two persons who have chosen each other out of all the species with the design to be each other's mutual comfort and entertainment, and have in action bound themselves to be good humored, affable, discrete, forgiving, patient and joyful with respect to each other's frailties and perfections, to the end of their lives.

Addison

The decision to love must be made by individuals with the capacity to trust self and commit to an other of value. Relations based on anything less are exercises in masochism. Loving is an open-ness. It is a self looking past a mirror to something familiar in another face. Nothing but pain can result from the gaze of a self convinced of its own decrepitude.

No love in the world can fill the cracks in the mirror image.

If one lover finds himself so appalling as to make looking past the mirror unbearable, it is the right — no, the responsibility of the other to remove him or herself from acts and expressions of self loathing — lest the beloved mistake the averted gaze for rejection.

One must come to love prepared to walk away empty-handed but whole....or not come at all.

Sharon Chestnut

There's still much sorrow and sin,
Injustice, oppression, wrong and hate.
Still does arrogance deaden conscience,
Rob struggling souls of e'en the crumbs
Of pity, and make, of loathesome flesh
And crumbling dust, fair seeming Idols
For worship. Still does Ignorance blow
a mighty Horn and try to shame
True wisdom. Still do men drive slaves,—
Protesting smoothly the end of Slavery!
Still does greed devour the substance
of helpless ones within power.
Nay more, — the fine Individual Voice
Is smothered in the raucous din
Of Groups and Crowds that madly shout
What they call Slogans New, —
Old falsehoods long discredited.

What can we do to make God's light
Shine forth through the darkness around us?
We must first let it shine in our own true Selves
With that light in the niche of our inmost hearts
We can walk with steps both firm and sure:
We can humbly visit the comfortless
And guide their steps. Not we, but the Light
Will guide! But oh! the joy of being found
Worthy to bear the Torch, and to say
to our brethren: "I too was in darkness,
Comfortless, and behold, I have found
Comfort and Joy in the Grace Divine!"

Thus should we pay the dues of Brotherhood
By walking humbly, side by side,
In the Ways of the Lord,
With mutual aid and comfort,
And heartfelt prayer,
Backed by action,
That God's Good Purpose
May be accomplished
In us all together!

From commentaries 298-300 of the Holy Quran
as translated by Abdullah Usef Ali

We're all called upon to take facades as a matter of course, yet compromises of this sort often rob us of the fullest experience—life as we were meant to live. This prayer is a reminder of the cost.

Masquerader's Prayer

Hold me tightly in your hand, Lord—
No matter how I twist, squirm, and try to struggle free,
determined to stumble along my crooked path.
The mask I sometimes wear is suffocating me today.
Everyone else may look and move on, but my eye is the mirror,
speaking the truth.

Others will look to me today, and I need to be strong,
with an honest, real faith, not a simulated piety.
Regardless of how beautiful I make my token, superficial prayer,
don't let me off.

How often I deceive myself, and in my blindness dare to think
that you may be satisfied with the shell of my life.
I give you the words as I would give my own shadow,
and hug the real me close.
Always, of course, with the promise of truly meeting you
at another hour.
Then, I shall be honestly penitent, supremely devout,
in deeper communion. Next time.

Don't listen, Lord! Don't let me go
to break my fragile promises again.
Now is the minute I need you, not tomorrow or next week.

> If I escape, I go as a bird with a broken wing, as an
> unfinished song.
> And it will be all the more painful since I have known
> the real surrender,
> which evermore makes ritual alone a shoddy substitute.

How easily we slip into our usual slots, with practised tongue forming
the golden words!

One day I fear You may in exasperation open wide your hand and fling
me out!

Don't let me get away with the masquerade today.
Hold me tightly 'till my restless mind is still—
'till every thought be found within your will—
Until my prayer be honest—until my prayer is Me—
hold me tightly in your hand.

Dorothy Blackman

Personal Thoughts On Professional Spirituality

. . . It is in connection with the same endless conflict within me between the poet and the preacher, one of whom depends for his mission upon inspiration and the other upon conscious endeavor. Straining of consciousness leads to insensitiveness, of which I am more afraid than anything else. The preacher is the professional dealer in particular ideas. His customers come at all hours of the day and put questions to him. The answers, which he gets into the habit of producing, gradually lose their living quality, and his faith in his ideas runs the risk of being smothered in the deadness of his words. I believe that such a tragedy is more common than people suspect, especially with those who are good and therefore are everready to sign their cheque of benefit for others without waiting to see if the cash has had time to accumulate in the bank.

Rabindranath Tagore in a letter to C. F. Andrews, January 8th, 1921

Spirit Manifest

How we begin the day leaves its mark upon the rest of it. How often we say of someone out-of-tune with life and with himself, "he got out of bed on the wrong side this morning!" It shows, and so does prayer.

A missionary has told of a little native village on the edge of a forest. The few Christians there did not find it easy to secure a place and time for prayer in their huts or in the village itself, and so were encouraged to make their way through the long grass into a secluded spot in the forest where they could be alone with God. Soon, from each Christian hut, a pathway was beaten in the grass, but if anyone grew slack in prayer the pathway would quickly grow over again. "What has happened to your path, brother?" the missionary would then ask. Prayer showed.

To begin the day with God, to speak to him before we speak to anyone else, to seek His blessing upon all the undertakings of the coming hours is to make all the difference to our lives and to the lives of those with whom we come into contact.

From the essay "Never Stop Praying" by Jim Nettleship

Tales of the Wise and Foolish

DISABILITIES

"I have been inspired by spiritual writings, but I am unfortunately too old," said an elderly retired man to a teacher.

"The soul has no age," the teacher responded. "Years pertain to the body."

"I am also poor," the elderly man continued.

"You speak of material restrictions," said the teacher, "but we are concerned primarily about spiritual poverty."

"I should also say that I have no influence."

"Those who tread the spiritual way have often been obscure and little regarded," the teacher observed.

"What can I, an old man, possibly do that would make a difference?"

"Out of time and thought destiny is woven," the teacher pointed out. "Earthly edifices and monuments crumble into dust, but the temples and palaces built by aspiration are more lasting."

"But I have just enough breath to keep going."

"Out of breath a flute player creates a world of enchanting music," the teacher countered.

"Are all my disabilities, then, frailties of the body that weigh little in the life of the spirit?" the old man asked somewhat wistfully.

"You have said it," the teacher replied.

Francis Merchant

Fellowship in Prayer reports with great sadness the death of Mrs. Harriet Conner, a dear friend. Mrs. Conner served faithfully as editor of the lovely publication **Praying Hands**. *She will be missed.*

Both Mrs. Harriet Conner and the publisher of **Praying Hands,** *Mr. James L. Jenks, have been good and supportive friends of Fellowship in Prayer for many years.*

Notes On Our Contributors

Louise Wilson teaches Quaker Studies at the Friends School in Virginia Beach, Virginia. She is an active member of Virginia Beach Friends Meeting and clerk of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative). Louise leads prayer and healing groups in her own meeting, as well as in other Friends meetings and gatherings. She thinks of herself as a person growing in understanding and the love of God.

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Special thanks to Sharon Chestnut for her considerable assistance with this issue.

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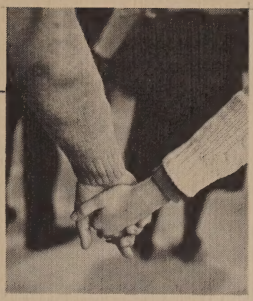

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Fellowship in Prayer announces with pleasure the election of Howard Ende to the Board of Trustees. A graduate of the Columbia University School of Law in New York City, Mr. Ende is married and the father of three children. Mr. Ende serves as counsel at Princeton University. We welcome him and look forward to his enthusiastic contribution to Fellowship in Prayer.

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